

THEOLOGY AND THE CHALLENGES OF GLOBAL
INTEGRATION—INTEREST GROUP

Conveners: Gemma Tulud Cruz, Australian Catholic University
Mark Miller, University of San Francisco
Moderator: Mark Miller, University of San Francisco
Presenters: Mary Jo Iozzio, Boston College
Vincent Miller, University of Dayton
Julie Hanlon Rubio, Saint Louis University

This year's session considered the global challenges of human mobility, technology, and family violence. The session had three panel presenters. The first presenter, Mary Jo Iozzio, reflected on the moral implications of the Syrian refugee crisis in "Global Integration and Human Mobility: The Case of More Than 3 Million Syrian Refugees." Iozzio pointed out how 53% of Syrian refugees are children and used the Catholic Social Teaching principles of human dignity, solidarity, and preferential option for the poor as tools to wrestle with our complicit and complacent failure. In particular, Iozzio drew attention to mercy as linked to David Hollenbach's idea of "moral proximity" and Pope Francis' critique of the "globalization of indifference."

In the meantime, Vincent Miller's presentation, "Solidarity, Technology, and Globalization: Attending to the Infrastructures of Relationship," evaluated various means of global interconnection from the perspective of how they help and hinder solidarity. In particular, Miller considered the multifaceted challenges that the moral spaces constructed by contemporary internet technology pose such as access and censorship, unification and homogenization as well as deterritorialization. Miller argued that, in the realm of unrestricted choice that is the internet, attention becomes a locus of virtue, and solidarity becomes a spatial virtue due to its structuring principles, e.g. "social" is constructed by elective affinity.

Meanwhile, Julie Hanlon Rubio's presentation "Justice, Fidelity and Mercy: A Feminist Appraisal of Family Violence in a Global Context." explored the difficulties of the Church in credibly offering accompaniment in the context of family violence. Rubio noted how family violence received limited attention at the 2014 and 2015 synods on the family, the Humanum Conference on the complementarity of men and women, and the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. Rubio advanced an argument for a more adequate vision of accompaniment by: (1) examining the reality of family violence worldwide, with attention to the global South; (2) offering a critical appraisal of the treatment of gender, mercy, and marriage at the synod and related gatherings; and (3) drawing on feminist theologians to construct a more adequate theological understanding of mercy and justice.

The presentations were followed by a vigorous discussion on several issues touched upon by the presenters. These include (1) how the gospel idea of justice and mercy can more concretely address the Syrian crisis; (2) the danger of

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being desensitized by mass media; (3) the relationship between poverty and family violence; and (4) the question of sources for addressing family violence, including the need to go beyond Catholic Social Teaching due to its weaknesses and using feminist writers outside of the West, e.g. Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

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